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ABSTRACT

Prior research has suggested that solutions to teacher labor market problems must take into account the importance of local context and indigenous labor market forces. With this in mind, three rural school systems in north Louisiana collaborated with the Louisiana Center for Rural or Small Schools (LaCROSS) to develop teacher recruitment materials. LaCROSS researchers interviewed school administrators, teachers, and local officials to determine the elements in each parish and its schools that might attract prospective teachers. Recruitment materials were then tailored to local market forces. For Jackson Parish, packets, videos, and slides emphasized a high teacher pay supplement, proximity to urban centers and area universities, availability of housing and recreational activities, and an industrial tax base. For Franklin Parish, packets, videos, and slides emphasized a developing urban hub and industrial base, advantages of small rural schools, and availability of recreational activities and a university branch campus. For very rural Tensas Parish, a brochure emphasized advantages of small rural schools and opportunities for certification, entry level teaching, and teaching "back home." An appendix contains samples of these recruitment materials. (SV)

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Teacher Recruitment in Three Rural Louisiana Parishes: The Development of Recruitment Materials

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School administrators have long considered themselves to be at the mercy of teachers. Teachers find other jobs (in or out of education), move, have children, get sick, take a sabbatical or leave of absence, and sometimes even become administrators. What administrators want is an available supply of appropriately certified teachers eager, willing, and able to teach, coach, and sponsor whatever and whenever they are asked.

More recently, the issue of quality has been added to the concern for sufficiency of supply. Not only are teachers to be available in adequate numbers, they must also be highly trained, have an advanced degree, and be of high quality.

Small, rural schools and school systems which have traditionally struggled to ensure an adequate supply of teachers now find themselves forced to face issues of quality. As in issues of educational finance, those systems which have never achieved equity (financial or personnel) are now expected to demonstrate excellence (curriculum, facilities) (Hare, 1986).

Traditional literature on the function of personnel directors and their departments presents an urban bias familiar to other aspects of educational research and policy (DeYoung, 1987). Small, rural school systems often do not have a personnel director: the personnel responsibility

is that of the superintendent or is an additional responsibility of a supervisor (elementary, secondary) or a director (child welfare, federal programs).

It seems, then, that rural and small schools are at a decided disadvantage in attempts to compete with urban systems for teachers. They can offer neither the higher salaries of larger systems, faster pace of urban-suburban living, or staffed personnel departments with recruiting budgets. More importantly, however, would seem to be educational policies and research reflecting an urban bias.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, urban systems have done little to press their advantages. Many larger urban universities are dropping undergraduate teacher education altogether. Schools, urban and rural, control neither the supply nor the demand of teachers. Schools are placed in a position of reacting to the policies of others: state policies affecting class size; course requirements for graduation, and teacher certification requirements; federal policies regarding student loans and future-teacher grants.

To state and federal policy makers, teachers are labor and concerns over their supply and demand are labor market concerns. To these policy makers, useful research is research to enable the control and adjustment of the market. As Bird (1984) notes:

> In order for teacher supply and demand research to be useful to policy makers, it should explore the relationships among variables which affect the market and identify effective options for control and adjustment of supply and demand conditions. This means going beyond the simple collection of descriptive data and beginning the complex process of analyzing the behavioral and institutional characteristics of the teacher labor market. (p. ii).

One such examination of the teacher labor market was Barnett Berry's (1984) "Case Study of the Teacher Labor Market in the Southeast". Berry explored the "in-depth significant supply and demand variables which affect the teacher labor market in the Southeast" (p. 3). He investigated six universities and six school systems in two southeastern states. Berry termed his research ethnographic and "utilized document analysis, on-site observation, and key informant and spontaneous interviewing" (p. 4).

Berry utilized five sensitizing questions to guide his research. These are:

1. Background and Contextual Variables. What is the rural/urban makeup of the university/school system location? What economic, cultural, or geographic variables affect this location? What are student enrollment patterns and racial diversity of both students (in school systems and universities) and teachers? What are the characteristics and patterns of teacher education programs?

2. Position Availability, Need, and Turnover. How many openings and resignations do school systems report? Why do teachers leave and where do they go? What are critical areas of teacher shortage in school systems? How does one school system compare to others on these variables?

> 3. Paths to Education and Teaching. What are the family backgrounds (occupationally speaking) of education students and teachers? How and when do students and teachers become interested in careers in public education? Who or what influences students' and teachers' occuptional choice? How do students become interested in their particular university? How do teacher education programs recruit students? Where will students teach? Why? How long? What do students want in teaching? How do students perceive schools and what school systems want in prospective teachers? What alternative occupations do students consider?
>
> 4. Identification, Recruitment, and Selection of Teachers. How do university teacher education and placement officials engage in the "placing" of their students in teaching positions? How do students and teachers engage in their placement in teaching positions? What are the recruiting and hiring procedures of school systems? How many and what kinds of applicants do school systems "have on file?" Where do teachers come from? What characteristics do school systems look for in teachers?
>
> 5. Employment Conditions and Teacher Alternatives. What are schools like for teachers? What conditions attract teachers to teaching/their school system/their school? What do teachers want in teaching? What can school systems do to attract and retain teachers? What alternative occupations do teachers consider? Why do teachers stay in teaching? (p. 4-5)

While Berry notes "(e)ducational policy cannot necessarily remedy all convoluting factors affecting the teacher labor market", he contends:

> ...it must account for them if policies are to be regionally (urban versus rural) sensitive and, consequently, effective and efficient, fair and just, reasonable and possible. (p. 74)

Berry identified a number of factors his research revealed to be important in policy analysis and development. Among them are:

-- economic, cultural and social differences between urban and rural teacher labor markets,

-- mobility patterns in urban areas which tie teachers to their spouses and their nuclear families,

-- mobility patterns in rural areas which tie teachers to their communities and their extended families,

-- the pattern of urban teachers to reenter the occupation after an extended absence due to spouse mobility and separations, child rearing, or graduate school,

-- that school systems, due to public budget processes, internal policies, and certification standards, have little flexibility in the identification and selection of teachers (those systems with more locally paid teaching positions have more flexibility),

-- the primary importance of student discipline problems, parental attitudes, and administrative support (not money) on the morale of teachers. (p. 74-75)

From these factors, Berry develops recommendations for consideration by policy makers. His recommendations "...vary along economic, geographic, and cultural dimensions...(which) reflect an understanding of the diverse contexts manifested in urban and rural locations..." (p. 75-76).

Three (3) recommendations are of particular interest in this context.

-- School systems should become more knowledgeable of and sensitive to labor market forces indigenous to their locale. By systematically utilizing data regarding where teachers are coming from, why they are leaving, and other potential applicant pools, school systems can begin to market themselves and recruit in order to influence the labor market in their area.

> -- Urban school systems (with nearby industry and universities) have more capability to attract teachers presently not choosing to teach. They can promote the hiring of able, but noncertified, teachers and assist them in receiving certification while they are teaching.
>
> -- Recognizing that many urban students and teachers do not desire to live in rural areas with limited social opportunities, rural school systems can promote (i.e., market) the benefits of living outside the city much as industry does in attracting talented graduates to their rural industrial sites. (p. 76-77)

These recommendations make it:

> ...possible for policy makers to see that solutions to teacher labor market problems are embedded within the context of the settings under study. Therefore, if solutions are to be effective and efficient, fair and just, reasonable and possible, they must be rooted within those settings. That is, the solutions for urban areas may be as diferent from the solutions for rural areas as the solutions for rural areas are different from the solutions for isolated rural areas. (p. 81)

Based on this recognition of the importance of local context and indigenous teacher labor market forces, a collaborative effort was undertaken between three (3) rural school systems in north Louisiana and the Louisiana Center for Rural or Small Schools (LaCROSS) to assist each school system in developing materials to recruit teachers. The materials developed were to reflect local context and local market forces. Following is a description of the three (3) parishes and their schools, and an explanation of how local context and market forces influenced the development of recruitment materials.

Jackson Parish

Jackson Parish is 583 square miles in the middle of north Louisiana's timber lands. The parish has 17,300 residents with Jonesboro, the largest town, having just over 5000. The next largest town is Hodge (including East Hodge and North Hodge) with about 1750. Other towns are Chatham with 714 people, Quitman with 231, and Eros with 158.

Like much of Louisiana, natural resources constitute the economic base of Jackson Parish. Stone Container Corporation and its related subsidiaries (paper mill, bag converting mill, land management division) employ 3300 people, nearly one-fifth the total parish population, in their pulpwood and paper making operations. This is a major factor in Jackson Parish's 6-7% unemployment rate in a region averaging some 15% and a state averaging some 10%. The U.S. average is 5-6%.

Jackson Parish Schools educate yearly 3400 students, and employ 230 teachers and administrators. There are ten (10) schools: one (1) kindergarten center, four (4) elementary schools, one (1) junior high, two (2) high schools, and two (2) K-12 schools. The school buildings are recently renovated and all are air conditioned.

A local annual teacher supplement of over $3000 means a Jackson Parish teacher is paid nearly 25% higher than the base state teacher pay. Local financial support for taxation is at the state average. Three (3) of each five (5) teachers have degrees beyond the Master's Degree.

Such basic demographic information was made more meaningful through formal interviews and informal conversations with the system superintendent, secondary coordinator, teachers, and principals. Outside the system, interviews were conducted with the mayor of Jonesboro and an executive of Stone Container, who used to be president of the school board. Additionally, school and system documents were reviewed.

What emerged from these contacts was a number of elements these people believed to be important to Jackson Parish and its schools.

-the close proximity to the three (3) universities of north Louisiana: Grambling State University, Louisiana Tech University, and Northeast Louisiana University.

-the close proximity to larger urban areas: Ruston (21,000), Grambling (4,300), Winnfield (7,400), West Monroe (16,000), and Monroe (60,000).

-availability of apartments in Jonesboro.

-community pride in community schools.

-family atmosphere of faculty in each school.

-strength of economic base.

-availability of materials and resources for teachers and students.

-pride in athletic achievements.

-emphasis on academic achievement for both college bound and non-college bound students.

-pride in school facilities.

-pride in graduates of parish schools.

-recreational opportunities: fishing, boating, hunting, skiing, swimming, camping, tennis, baseball leagues, etc.

To apply these elements and demographic information, however, requires Berry's (1984) knowledge of "labor market forces indigenous" (p. 76) to Jackson Parish. Specifically, this application required information concerning where teachers came from and why they stay, and school system recruiting practices.

Many of the teachers in Jackson Parish live within the parish and many live in the communities where they teach. A large number, however, live outside the parish and commute. It is important to note that these commuters are not those typically associated with rural schools. They are not just teachers from urban areas waiting for a job to open up 'back home' where they live (Berry, 1984), but have decided to continue the drive to 'their' school. Also, a number of teachers commute from surrounding rural parishes because, in part, of the higher pay in Jackson Parish. Jackson Parish, then, draws teachers from nearby urban and rural areas who see teaching there as permanent employment.

Employing certified teachers has never been a real problem, but the superintendent, who is in his second year, has

increased efforts to recruit from area universities. A former parish principal, who also taught in the parish, was named secondary supervisor just after the superintendent assumed office and has been given recruitment responsibilities. He attends the teacher job fairs each area university sponsors each semester.

Three different types of recruitment materials were developed for Jackson Parish to present specific messages to specific audiences.

- -teachers can live in urban areas and teach in rural areas.
- -teachers can live in Jackson Parish or surrounding urban areas and pursue a variety of advanced degrees at area universities.
- -Jackson Parish offers many recreational activities for adults and children.
- -teacher salaries are competitive.
- -parish schools have strong community and parental support.
- -students are involved in school activities and are academically oriented.

The major item produced was a packet of information to be given to perspective teachers at job fairs and to those who applied in person at the school board offices. Each packet was in a 9" X 13" folder with two interior pockets. The front cover of the folder bore the name 'Jackson Parish Schools', and an open book, the symbol Jackson Parish Schools use on their stationary, envelopes, etc. The back cover was a large map of Jackson Parish, which detailed the highways to nearby parishes and urban areas. This map was

to be the primary source of information to teachers concerning accessability of the parish to the outside world and of the world to Jackson Parish.

Inside was a letter from the Superintendent which emphasized specific points about Jackson Parish Schools.

-small schools, stable student populations, strict discipline.

-strong community and parental support.

-excellent facilities and strong financial resources.

-involvement of teachers in planning.

-Jackson Parish as a good place to live.

-a future in Jackson Parish.

Also, in the folder was a four (4) page description of Jackson Parish and its schools, with each page titled and describing a different aspect. These are:

Pleasing Community, Conveniently Located
-proximity to area universities and urban centers.
-housing opportunities.
-community pride and improvement.
-economic base and resourses.

Collegial School District
-teachers as a caring, sharing family group with a 'buddy system' for new teachers.
-61% of teachers with advanced degrees.
-resources for teachers.
-local salaries 25% higher than state base.

Student Life
-athletic championships.
-academically advanced classes, with 50% of students college bound.
-emphasis on vocational programs.
-famous graduates.
-excellent facilities.

Diverse Recreational Activities
-new 5000 acre lake with 70 miles of shoreline.
-boating, fishing, skiing, hunting.
-31,000 acre wildlife management area open for hunting.
-Jackson Parish Recreation Department offerings.

Additionally, slides and video were made to be used during recruitment activities. The recruiter, for example, can utilize a self contained VCR unit to show the video on a continual basis. The video has no sound, but presents about 15 minutes of shots of: parish schools, Caney Lake, Stone Container, the Jonesboro beautification project, and a number of area apartments. The slides are virtually the same. The video and slides are to be used to attract students to the Jackson Parish recruiting station at teacher job fairs.

Because of the many advantages it enjoys, especially location and economic-financial, Jackson Parish uses a 'soft-sell' attitude which was employed in the development of recruitment materials. Because of these advantages, Jackson Parish sells itself.

Franklin Parish

Franklin Parish, 636 square miles, has an agricultural economy, based primarily in cotton. Virtually all its 24,000 residents are engaged in farming or farm dependent operations. Recent attempts to diversify have seen the establishment of a number of catfish farming operations. Contingent businesses, catfish processing and catfish food production, have recently been introduced. Unemployment is 14%, well above the state average.

Winnsboro is the parish seat and largest town with 6,000 residents. Other cities included Wisner (1500), Mangham (875), Gilbert (800), and Baskin (290). Winnsboro is the hub of the Parish activities, and is approximately 40 miles from Monroe and Northeast Louisiana University. No other sizable urban areas are within 55 miles or university within 70 miles.

Franklin Parish has 5400 students in 12 schools. Wisner has two (2) schools (K-6, 7-12), Winnsboro has four (4) covering K-12 (K-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12), five (5) towns have their own K-12 school, and one (1) attendance area (Ward III) has its own K-12 school. That is, the parish is essentially divided into eight (8) attendance zones, each with its own school. Of the six (6) K-12 schools, the largest is Crowville with 500 students and Ogden is the smallest with 275.

The majority of the 310 or so teachers and principals are graduates of, or are certified through, Northeast Louisiana University. Over the years, teaching has provided employment for many spouses of those engaged in parish agricultural operations. In recent years, a number of non-traditional aged students (older) are beginning their pursuit of an educational degree and certification. Franklin Parish schools were well known to the LaCROSS researchers, a faculty member and two (2) graduate students,

as many Franklin Parish undergraduates enter the College of Education and many teachers there pursue advanced degrees and administration-supervision certification.

The local teacher supplement is about $1250 per year, but has been declining in the past few years. The supplement is based on sales tax revenue, and the declining agricultural ecomony is adversely affecting local businesses. Parish shoppers have long driven to Monroe to shop and a new mall is attracting even more Franklin residents. Franklin's local tax contribution for education is approximately two-thirds (2/3) of the state average.

Formal interviews were conducted with the superintendent and other central office staff as well as the President of the Winnsboro Chamber of Commerce. Items of importance included:

-a branch campus of Northeast Louisiana University located near Wisner. Day and night classes are offered at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
-half the teachers in the system have master's degrees.
-all schools are air conditioned.
-individual schools have special programs (i.e., a vocational-technical curriculum at Winnsboro High School, a computer lab at Baskin High School).
-teachers are involved in numerous committees, including pupil progression, textbook adoption, and lesson plan design.
-Franklin faculty have been recognized for regional and state teaching awards.
-The Winnsboro area is working to become identified as a progressive growing city.
-utilization of an outdoor classroom (Nature's Acres).
-development of a model experimental farm (North Forty).

Teachers in Franklin Parish tend to live in Winnsboro or in the small towns where they teach or in the rural areas outside these towns. Few teachers live outside Franklin Parish and those who do tend not to stay for long. Those from outside the Parish will often live in a rural area close to their school.

Franklin Parish recruits at the three (3) area universities, but has typically employed those from Franklin or surrounding parishes. An attempt was made to portray Winnsboro as an easily accessible urban center suitable for both permanent, family living and for more temporary apartment living. School buildings are old, but are in sufficient repair as to be presentable.

The recruiting packets were like those of Jackson Parish, and contained the school logo on the cover, three(3) description pages and a letter from the superintendent. The packets were to emphasize:

-the strong support of Franklin Parish businesses.
-the identification of Winnsboro as the 'hub' of agriculture and business for the surrounding rural parishes.
-the interest and involvment of the Winnsboro-Franklin Parish Chambers of Commerce in the parish schools.
-that Franklin Parish does offer a teacher supplement.
-the presence of the branch campus of Northeast Louisiana University.
-the abundance of hunting and fishing in and near the parish.
-the recreational facilities and organized recreational programs in Winnsboro.
-the low student-teacher ratio.
-the opportunities for teacher involvement.

Additionally, it was important to include a letter from the superintendent to let it be known that she was actively seeking to recruit the best teachers available to Franklin Parish. Also, like Jackson Parish, a video and slides were made for the system recruiter to use in attracting teachers to the parish recruiter. The scenes in these were selected to portray Winnsboro as a progressive, growing urban area and Franklin Parish as diversifying its economy. They were to break the stereotype of what one would expect to see as typical pictures of Franklin Parish. Selected topics included:

-Winnsboro Industrial Park.
-commercial catfish operations.
-McDonald's.
-Johnny's Pizza (The Domino's of North Louisiana's larger small towns).
-Walmart.
-Franklin Parish Hospital.
-Catholic Church (this is North Louisiana, not South).
-facilities at Winnsboro parks: swimminng pool, tennis courts, softball fields, etc.
-apartment complex in Winnsboro.

Many in Franklin Parish want to change its image from that of the backward, small town, farm dependent economy to an urban, progressive, diverse economic center. This will be neither simple nor easy, and attracting to rural Franklin Parish those desiring to teach in an urban area will take more than recruitment packets, videos, and slides.

Tensas Parish

Tensas Parish is 623 square miles of delta farm land running along the Mississippi River. It is a farm economy of cotton and soybeans. Tensas has 8000 residents, about half (1/2) the 1940 population. Residents who have stayed, however, have moved to town. St. Joseph, the parish seat, has about 1,700 residents, up 600 since 1940. Newellton, the largest town in the parish, has just over 1,700 residents, up 900 since 1940. The other town in the parish, Waterproof, has 1300, up 700. Employment is seasonal, and one-third (1/3) of the families there live below the poverty level.

Tensas Parish is between the historic Mississippi cities of Vicksburg, 38 miles to the north, and Natchez, 15 miles to the south. A wide two (2) lane state highway runs north-south through Tensas, but the three (3) parish towns offer little reason to stop. There are no apartments and, though there are places to get a sandwich for lunch, there is no restaurant serving dinner.

Tensas has an elementary school and a high school in each of its three (3) towns, for a total of 1650 students. There are 109 teachers and administrators for a 17:1 student-teacher ratio. Just over 40% of the students (700) attend school in Newellton.

There is a teacher pay supplement, but it is based on sales tax and has declined over the past few years. This year it is anticipated the supplement will total $700 - $900, or some $60 - $75 per monthly paycheck.

Interviews were conducted with the Tensas superintendent, teachers, a principal, and an undergraduate in the teacher education program at Northeast Louisiana University. Important factors were determined to be:

-the adventages of small schools.
-elementary schools have active PTO's.
-high schools have active athletic booster clubs, a low dropout rate, and over 50% of its graduates attending college.
-all Tensas Parish schools quality for cancellation of Perkins Loans (National Defense/ Direct Student Loans).
-excellent hunting, fishing, camping, boating, picnicking.
-Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge is a superb wildlife habitat.
-Tensas Parish Schools experience continually a shortage of certified teachers at all grade levels.

Teachers in Tensas usually live within the Parish and are from Tensas Parish. Of those who do not, some are from Mississippi and were attracted to Louisiana at a time when Louisiana paid teachers considerably more than did Mississippi. The Superintendent fears those near retirement will do so as soon as eligible and begin teaching in Mississippi. He also fears his Mississippi teachers with only a few years in Louisiana will find it economically advantageous to resign from Louisiana and begin anew in Mississippi.

Those teachers from other Louisiana parishes are typically of three (3) types:

-Those who are certified and are comfortable in their school in Tensas.

-Those who are certified, but are waiting for a position to open up in their school 'back home'.

-Those who are not certified (usually have not passed the NTE) and all the teachers 'back home' are certified. They, too, will return 'back home' when they pass the NTE and a job opens up.

The Superintendent explained that he does not attend any Teacher Job Fairs, as he cannot compete with area systems which have:

-higher supplements,
-urban areas, and/or
-accessability to the urban areas of other parishes.

Instead, he keeps up with all students from Tensas Parish who are attending universities, especially those in teacher education programs. He will often "keep in touch" through family members, letting them know of position openings or potential job openings. Of greater interest, however, is that the Superintendent reads the newspapers of area parishes and contacts all graduates of teacher education programs or subject areas (English, Math). He reports he has occasionally found an employable teacher this way.

The Superintendent also reports he has used two (2) other available programs to Tensas Parish advantage. He actively works with universities in Louisiana which allow the semester of student teaching to occur away from the vacinity of the university. He notes the only student teachers he

would ever get are from Tensas Parish, so he doesn't get any teachers he normally wouldn't.

The other program he has utilized is the Louisiana Alternate Post-Baccalaureate Certification Program. Under this, persons with a degree in a secondary subject area (Math, Science, English) take a few teacher education courses, are hired as a classroom teacher in their subject area, are supervised by a university faculty member and a high school teacher, pass the NTE, and are certified to teach.

These programs, however helpful they may be, do not mitigate the inherent conditions in Tensas Parish. Last year, for example, the Superintendent hired a certified teacher at mid-year, but could find no place for her to stay: there are no apartments in Tensas Parish. She lived with a Tensas Parish School Board member and his family for a month. Another board member's mother died, however, and this teacher rented her three (3) bedroom house for the remainder of the school year. This fall that teacher is teaching 'back home'.

Because the Superintendent does not recruit at area university job fairs, no recruitment packets were developed. We did, however, develop a brochure to include in mailings to initially contact prospective teachers. These brochures had the Tensas Parish School's logo on the front and were to emphasize:

-small schools and the low student-teacher ratio.
-academic achievement of students.
-programs to attract non-certified teachers to Tensas Parish.
-Tensas Parish Schools qualifications for the Perkins Loan cancellation.
-recreational opportunities in Tensas.
-locations from which teachers commute to Tensas (Mississippi, Concordia Parish, Madison Parish).

Accordingly, neither videos nor slides were developed.

Summary

Policy research in the teacher labor market has long constituted little more than "counting heads in one fashion or another" (Bird, 1984, p. i). Berry's (1984) study of the teacher labor market in the southeast (U.S.) suggests that while :

> educational policy cannot necessarily remedy all convoluting factors affecting the teacher labor market...it must account for them if policies are to be regionally (urban versus rural) sensitive and, consequently, effective and efficient, fair and just, reasonable and possible. (p. 74)

Berry (1984) further recommends "(s)chool systems should become more knowledgeable of and sensitive to labor market forces indigenous to their locale" (p.76). Tailoring recruitment materials to lcoal market forces in the three (3) school systems described in this paper produced the following:

Jackson Parish = packets, video, and slides to emphasize:

-high locale supplement.
-proximity to urban centers.
-proximity to area universities.
-availability of apartments and housing.
-an industrial base.
-recreational activities.

Franklin Parish = packets, videos, and slides to emphasize:

-a developing industrial base.
-a developing urban hub.
-the advantages of small, rural schools.
-branch campus of the closest university.
-recreational activities.
-sights familiar to those in urban areas.

Tensas Parish = brochure to emphasize:

-opportunities for certification.
-advantages of small, rural schools.
-opportunities for entry level teaching.
-opportunities for teaching 'back home'.

The attempt of this paper has been simply to describe the use of research by local school systems in their attempts to address concerns of <u>their</u> teacher labor market. Their effectiveness will not be known for sometime, if ever. What's important here is the practice of local schools solving local problems, and the involvement of the area university in solving these problems. What is of concern for other systems and universities is the process of, and rationale for, these practices. What is of concern for policy makers is the acceptance of the necessity for national and state educational policy to effectively reflect regional teacher labor market forces indigeneous to local schools and local school systems. Only then can we hope to have policies which meet Berry's (1984) criteria of "...effective and efficient, fair and just, reasonable and possible" (p. 74).

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A P P E N D I X

Tensas Parish Schools

Schools

* Six separate campuses:

  In St. Joseph
  Tensas Elementary
  Davidson High

  In Newellton
  Routhwood Elementary
  Newellton High

  In Waterproof
  Lisbon Elementary
  Waterproof High

* Small Schools.

* 17-1 student-teacher ratio

* Exceptionally low drop-out rate.

* More than 50% of those graduating from Tensas high schools attend college.

* Active Booster clubs.

* Active PTO in every elementary school.

* Excellent adult education program.

* All schools have been outfitted with facilities for the handicapped.

Faculty

* Active and involved teaching staff.

* Access to parish-wide Instructional Media Center.

* Tensas Parish taxpayers voted a 10 mill property tax in 1987 dedicated to education.

* The state teacher internship program enables employed teachers to achieve certification while teaching.

* Student teaching within the parish is available if arranged through the Tensas Parish Superintendent's office.

* All Tensas Parish schools qualify for federal government cancellation of Perkins Loans (formerly National Defense / Direct Student Loan).

Recreation

* Excellent hunting and fishing and boating.

* Tensas Parish is home to many lakes and waterways, including Tensas River, Lake St. Joseph, Yucatan Lake, and Lake Bruin.

* Lake Bruin State Park is located between Newellton and St. Joseph. Picnic shelters, restroom facilities, tables, and barbeque pits are situated near the lake. A camping area along the lake offers bathhouse facilities and electrical and water hookups.

* Open for public hunting, Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge is a haven for hunters. This refuge is one of the largest bottomland hardwood areas left in the United States and is a superb habitat for wildlife.

* Winter Quarters Plantation, the only plantation home remaining along Grant's march, is located six miles south of Newellton.

Location

The beautiful parish of Tensas lies along the stately Mississippi River. This land of cotton fields and hardwood trees is reminiscent of the plantation era. Historic homes such as Winter Quarters (circa 1800) and historic places such as the Tensas Library and Plantation Museum (circa 1850) grace this northeast Louisiana parish. Tensas Parish derives its name from the Tensas Indians who originally inhabited the territory.

Being only 15 miles from Natchez and only 38 miles from Vicksburg, Tensas Parish is ideally suited for a commuting teacher. Highway 65 which connects these cities to Tensas Parish is an easily-negotiated, newly-surfaced roadway. Currently, teachers within the system commute from Mississippi as well as Concordia Parish and Madison Parish.

Blessed with fertile river soil, Tensas Parish is an agricultural region. Cotton, soybeans, wheat, and oats are the main crops. The rich soil also makes the area suitable for cattle production. These hardworking, agriculturally-oriented people continually strive to improve community living as evidenced by the locally supported parish hospital, library, and recreational facilities.

For further Information

Contact

Tensas Parish Schools

P.O. Box 318

St. Joseph, Louisiana

(318) 766-3269

Prepared Through

LaCROSS

Louisiana Center for Rural or Small Schools

329 Strauss Hall

Northeast Louisiana University

Monroe, Louisiana, 71209-0230

(318) 342-4079

FRANKLIN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

1809 Prairie Road
Phone (318) 435-9046
Winnsboro, Louisiana 71295

September 22, 1988

JACQUELYN A. SHIPP
Superintendent

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Dear Educator:

To consider a future in education is to consider your future in Franklin Parish, a rural parish that is small enough to have a personal concern for each individual, yet large enough to offer the latest in educational technology. Though progressive, we retain the positive, proven successes of the past.

The people of Franklin Parish, having always placed our children first, are our greatest asset. They support the school system with their time and money. Booster clubs and parent-teacher organizations provide many volunteer hours to better our schools. In 1969, the people passed a one-cent sales tax to supplement teachers' salaries and, in 1980, passed a half-cent sales tax to supplement classroom instruction and other educational needs. The current LASE survey reports that Franklin Parish ranks fourth in the state in the percent of educational monies (52%) spent for direct classroom instruction. It is significant that only two percentage points separate us from the parish spending the greatest amount in this category.

Leaders in private enterprise, leaders in government, leaders in the military, leaders in the medical profession, leaders in the legal profession, and leaders in education are graduates of Franklin Parish schools. Our system is a training ground for educators; many are currently serving as administrators in systems throughout the nation. During the past decade at least ten Franklin Parish educators have served as superintendents in systems throughout the state. T. H. Harris, the renown former state superintendent, gained valuable experience in the Franklin Parish School system, serving here from 1898 to 1902.

Our best product is our people, and we encourage you to become one of us. Welcome to Franklin Parish.

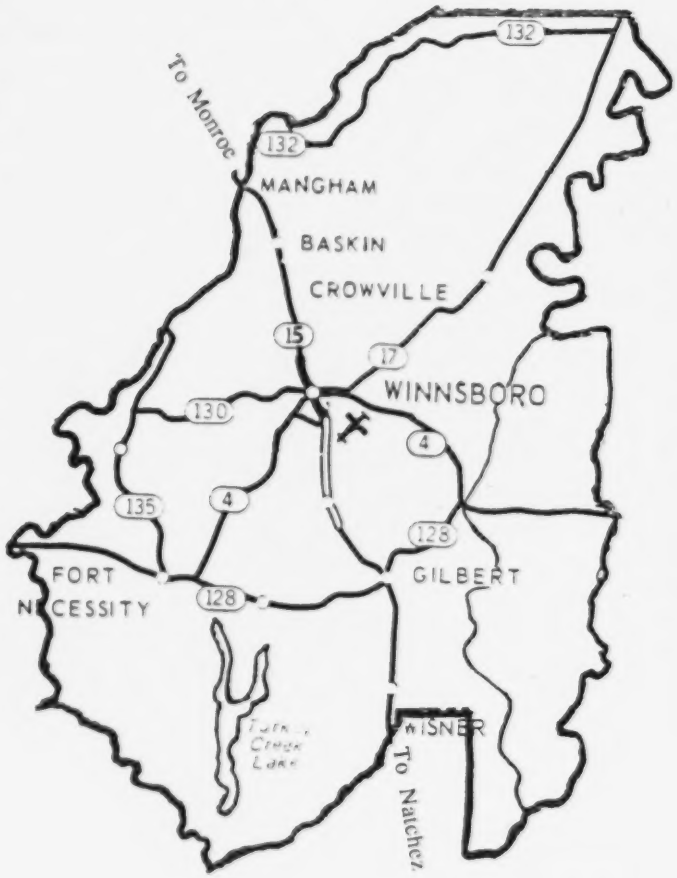
Sincerely,

Jacquelyn A. Shipp

Jacquelyn A. Shipp, Superintendent

Franklin Parish businesses are strong supporters of the school system. An annual parish-wide Science Fair is underwritten by the Franklin State Bank. The North Louisiana Mathematics Improvement Project is endowed by a federal grant in cooperation with the Winnsboro State Bank. The Winnsboro-Franklin Chamber of Commerce sponsors annual Social Studies and Writing Fairs, and also recently published Franklin Fantastic Authors in Review, a collection of poetry, short stories, and essays by students in the Franklin Parish schools. The Franklin Parish School Board helps defray the cost of the NLU-Franklin campus in Wisner. Parents, alumni, and community members also support athletics and bands through local booster clubs.

Taxpayers in Franklin Parish demonstrated their strong support of the Franklin Parish schools by voting upon themselves a tax for supplemental teacher pay. In 1988, this totaled to some $1250 additional pay per teacher.



Community Pride

Recreation is provided by 34 lakes and streams within one hours drive of Winnsboro. These waterways provide excellent fishing for Crappie, Bream, Bass, Cat, and other species.

Prime hunting areas are situated throughout both Franklin Parish and its neighboring parishes. This area of Louisiana has long been known to hunters as an abundant resource for duck, deer, and small game.

Held annually in April, the Franklin Parish Catfish Festival affords opportunities for entertainment and community comraderie to all who attend. This festival also provides many school involvement opportunities for the civic-minded educator.

The city of Winnsboro has an organized recreation program including little league baseball, 40 acre park with swimming pool, life guards, soft ball, and picnic and camping grounds. A golf and country club serve the area.

Winnsboro also offers the Cotton Country Trade Days the third weekend of each month. During this weekend the city hosts a flea market fashioned after the well-known flea market of Canton, Texas.

Located in the center of Northeast Louisiana, Franklin Parish represents the hub of business and industrial activities for its surrounding rural parishes. Franklin Parish is strategically located between the progressive cities of Monroe and West Monroe, and the historic city of Natchez, Mississippi. Only 26 miles from Monroe and 35 miles from Natchez, Franklin Parish is within easy commuting distance from these larger cities.

Rooted in agriculture, Franklin Parish citizens have always embraced a strong work ethic. These 24,000 citizens convey a positive attitude and a pride in their communities. The parish seat of Winnsboro has been described as a "friendly town" filled with people that are "easy to get to know." This community displays its unity by its downtown beautification program complete with tree and flower plantings and town gazebo. As a further show of civic pride, the citizens of Winnsboro gather together approximately every three months for a mass cleanup of their town.

The average teacher-pupil ratio in the Franklin Parish school system is 22 to 1. These 5400 students are distributed among 12 schools: K-12 schools at Baskin, Crowville, Fort Necessity, Gilbert, Ogden, and Ward 3; a pre-school through sixth grade elementary and a seventh through twelfth grade high school at Wisner; and a lower (K-3) and upper (4-5) elementary, junior high (6-8) and high school (9-12) at Winnsboro.

The Franklin Parish school system provides many special classes to accomodate individual student needs within the system. A class for the academically gifted is offered at each parish school. All schools contain computers accessible to both faculty and students. Due to parental concern and support, enough computers are furnished at the K-12 Baskin school to allow every student to participate in computer labs. A one-half day vocational-technical curriculum is held at the Northeast Louisiana Vocational School in cooperation with Winnsboro High. The system also contains an outdoor classroom, Nature's Acres, and the North Forty, a model experimental farm developed by the parish chapter of the Future Farmers of America.

Professional growth opportunities abound in the Franklin Parish system. Over half of the system's teachers have attained a Masters degree or higher due in part to the close proximity of Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe and an off-campus branch of NLU located in Wisner. Several Franklin Parish educators have earned various awards. Franklin Parish boasts the 1986-87 Louisiana Secondary Teacher of the Year and the 1987-88 Regional Elementary and Regional Principal of the Year award winners. The school board office itself provides a media center complex for teacher use. Subject area ccoordinators, who are master teachers, visit classes and serve as resource personnel. Opportunities for teacher inservices with stipends are offered as well as special inservices to assist new teachers within the system. Expenses were paid for twenty-seven of the system's teachers to attend the regional conference of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Teachers are given the opportunity to serve on various committees such as pupil progression plans, textbook adoption, and lesson plan design.

Most buildings are vintage (the Baskin auditorium is in the National Register of Historic Places), but nicely renovated. All buildings are air-conditioned.

JACKSON PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

P. O. BOX 705 JONESBORO, LOUISIANA 71251 PHONE 318/259-4456

ROBERT E. SCHMIDT, President JOHN R. TOLLETT, Superintendent

June 27, 1988

Dear Applicant:

Jackson Parish is similar to many of Louisiana's rural schools districts in several respects: schools with small enrollments, stable student population, and conservative educational philosophy. However, we perceive ourselves as being quite different and most fortunate. Our diverse economy provides great financial resources. A strong public commitment to education provides community support. A well planned curriculum program strives to meet the needs of every student.

Voters in Jackson Parish have approved two cents in sales taxes with one cent being dedicated to salaries. Our teachers earn over $3000 per year above the state minimum salary scale. We have approximately 26 mils in property tax collected for operation and maintenance of our schools. This, together with recent bond issues, will insure our schools are properly maintained. These figures rate Jackson Parish in the top 20 school districts in Louisiana.

Strong public support of our schools is exhibited through parent-teacher organizations and conferences. The conferences are extremely valuable and popular with over 95% attendance in 1988.

Our teachers are very much involved in inservice activities and curricula revisions. Projects to improve mathe. tics and reading instruction have been ongoing for the past two years. Science instruction will be added to this list. Vocational areas such as guidance, business education, agriculture, home economics, auto mechanics and welding receive priority funding.

In summary, Jackson Parish is an outstanding area to work, play and raise a family. You should strongly consider your future with us.

Yours truly,

John R. Tollett, Ed.D.
Superintendent

ms

Pleasing Community Conveniently Located

Jackson Parish, comprised of 583 square miles in the heart of North Central Louisiana's timber land, is within easy commuting distance of three of North Louisiana's universities: Northeast Louisiana University, Louisiana Tech University, and Grambling State University. Some teachers within the system commute from Grambling, Ruston, Winnfield, West Monroe, and Bienville Parish. Monroe is 31 miles northeast of the parish; Ruston and Grambling are approximately 15 miles north. Jonesboro is the parish seat. Other Jackson Parish towns include Hodge, Quitman, Chatham and Eros.

Teachers moving to Jackson Parish find housing to be plentiful and of high quality. There are five modern apartment complexes in the Jonesboro area as well as homes for rent. Homesites are available on Caney Lake for those who wish to take advantage of the lake's wonderous recreational opportunities.

The 17,300 citizens of Jackson Parish are justifiably proud of their parish. Jonesboro has recently completed a downtown beautification project in which over 3000 plants were planted. Eight hundred crossties were donated by local businesses to enclose these plantings. Old buildings were given a facelift and much of the downtown was made accessible to the handicapped through the use of sidewalk ramps.

Volunteers come out yearly in order to participate in the Clean City Contest, which Jonesboro has won for the past five years. Jonesboro has an outstanding library and a Museum and Fine Arts Center will soon be open with plans for revolving exhibits and art courses.

Jackson Parish is a financially strong parish due to the presence of Stone Container and its timber related subsidiaries. Stone Container's papermill, bag converting mill, and land management division employ approximately 3300 people. Stone Container is the largest manufacturer of brown paper in the world, with the Hodge mill being its largest plant. The bag converting mill is the largest bag mill in the world. Hodge's papermill was Stone Container's leading mill in production for 1987;Stone Container in Hodge also won the 1986 API Environmental Award for its waste product control.

Jackson Parish boasts one of the state's lowest unemployment rates and an above average income status. A new industrial park is being built on 75 acres in the Jonesboro-Hodge area and will attract new industry to this already thriving area.

Collegial School District

Jackson Parish employs 230 teachers and administrators and 200 support personnel, making it the parish's second largest employer. The teachers are a caring, sharing group who encorporate a "buddy system" for teachers new to the system. There are also designated department heads within each school to foster a sense of unity throughout each specialty area. Jackson Parish teachers set a high criteria of professionalism for themselves and 61% have a Masters Degree or above. This is facilitated by easy access to N.L.U., Louisiana Tech, and Grambling State University.

The central office is praised as being supportive and providing a sense of direction to its schools. Ladye Harveston, a Jackson Parish teacher for 17 years, says, "There is a general cooperation and family atmosphere existing between the central staff and the teaching staff that has made me a better teacher through their assistance."

Teachers are provided with a combination media center/resource room to furnish materials and ideas for classroom use. Sixty computers throughout the system are also available for faculty use.

Salaries for Jackson Parish teachers are considerably above the state base minimum pay. 70% of the proceeds from a recently passed one cent sales tax goes to certified personnel in the form of two "extra" checks. These checks are paid in December and June and equal approximately $3000 to $3500. A beginning teacher can expect to be paid some 25% higher than the state minimum.

The 3400 students in Jackson Parish are described by one principal as "an exceptional group of young people who are well-behaved, which speaks well of their parents." These students are proud of their school system and are very active in all phases of school activities. The Jonesboro-Hodge High School Future Business Leaders of America overwhelmingly won district honors for the 1987-88 school year; the football team won the state AA championship for the same year. Both the Jonesboro-Hodge girl's basketball team and boy's baseball team reached the Final Four championships in 1988, as did the Quitman track and cross-country team.

The parish school system consists of ten schools--one kindergarten center, four elementary schools, one junior high, two high schools, and two K-12 schools. Six of these schools contain a highly regarded program to serve the 10% of the students with special needs. Academically advanced classes are taught at Jonesboro-Hodge. The school system also provides a strong program for the musically gifted child.

Student goals are evenly distributed with 50% being college bound and 50% choosing vocational studies. The Jackson Parish school system mirrors this emphasis by a 42% increase in the vocational budget for the 1988-89 school year and by upholding yearly its strong curriculum for students who plan to enter college.

One Jackson Parish alumni, Patricia Maxwell, is a well-known author with the pen name of Jennifer Blake.

Well-maintained facilities reflect the pride of this parish's citizens. Most buildings are modern due to recent renovation projects, and all school plants are air-conditioned.

Excellent facilities, dedicated professionals, and hard-working students combine to make the challenge of teaching a rewarding experience in Jackson Parish.

Diverse Recreational Activities

Jackson Parish provides a great array of recreational choices. Caney Lake, which is located approximately five miles from Chatham, offers nearly 5000 acres of water and 70 miles of shoreline for boating, fishing, skiing, swimming, and picnicing fun. This new lake was completed in 1986 and was stocked with Florida bass, bluegill bream, redear bream, and crappie. Plans are to stock catfish at a later date as the water quality is suitable. A state park on Caney Lake which consists of 300 acres including a beach, picnic and camping grounds, and cabins complete with a swimming pool is being developed.

Being the heart of the timberland industry, Jackson Parish abounds with prime hunting terrain. One such site, the Jackson-Bienville Wildlife Management Area, boasts 31,000 acres of woodlands suitable for deer, turkey, squirrel, and other small game hunting.

The Jackson Parish Recreation Department offers a complete recreation program with classes and activities for all ages and ability levels. Activities include athletics and arts and crafts.

Facilities include the McDonald Recreation Center with adjacent playground, softball field, and double tennis courts. A baseball complex consisting of three baseball fields and an office, restrooms and concession center, seven asphalt all-purpose courts (which can be used for basketball, volleyball, or tennis) are located throughout the parish.